



Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Chairman

NEWS RELEASE

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FINANCE COMMITTEE APPROVES SOCIAL SECURITY NOMINEE, BAUCUS APPLAUDS FUNDING INCREASE FOR SSA

Finance Chairman called for administrative funding hike in continuing resolution

Washington, DC – In a vote off the Senate floor this afternoon, members of the Finance Committee favorably reported to the Senate the nomination of Michael Astrue to head the Social Security Administration. At Astrue's nomination hearing this month, Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) obtained a commitment from the nominee to "stay out" of political debates over the future of Social Security, including any rehashing of failed privatization schemes. Also today, Baucus applauded the news that the 2007 continuing resolution will restore \$200 million in administrative funds to the Social Security Administration (SSA). Baucus has strongly urged the restoration of funds to SSA to prevent backlogs for disability benefit claims from getting worse, and to ward off expected staff furloughs that could have caused service disruptions.

"The next Social Security Commissioner will inherit a slightly brighter budget picture than was envisioned for this year," said Baucus. **"The continuing resolution still doesn't give Social Security all the operating funds it needs, but at the very least we won't see the 10-day staff furlough that was feared. Congress can't forget that funding cuts to Social Security have a direct effect on the well-being of Social Security recipients and applicants. I will keep working to restore full administrative resources to Social Security in the coming year."**

A White House budget request in February of 2006 contained \$9.59 billion in 2007 operating funds for Social Security Administration. During congressional consideration of the budget, that amount was reduced by \$400 million, creating financial constraints for SSA.

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